

GRAY DAVIS, GOVERNOR

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Inside Seven—a District 7 Edition of the CT News

BILL REAGAN NAMED DEPUTY DISTRICT DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF DESIGN A Commitment to Quality

Congratulations! to Bill Reagan on his recent appointment as the new Deputy District Director, Division of Design for District 7. "I would like to extend a big welcome to Bill Reagan," said Robert W. Sassaman, District Director. "His efforts and outstanding achievements make him an asset to the District 7 executive team."

🗲 Caltrans

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Covina, California, Reagan earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Cal Poly Pomona in June, 1986 and was hired with District 7 in July, 1986 as a Junior Civil Engineer. By that time his credentials were well known at the Department; he had already worked as a Student Assistant at Caltrans from June, 1984 to January, 1985 in the Construction Branch.

Upon joining Caltrans full-time in 1986 as a Junior Civil Engineer, Reagan was placed in the rotation program until June, 1989. During that time he served stints in Construction, working on the Interstate 105 project in Downey; in Project Development, where he worked on the Ventura Freeway Improvement Project; in Hydraulics, where he helped design the Route 118/23 Interchange; and in Traffic Operations, where he worked in the famed Transportation Management Center. Along the way he was promoted to Assistant Transportation Engineer.

Reagan worked until 1995 in Project Development, where his commitment to quality was rewarded with a promotion to Associate Transportation Engineer in November, 1990 and Senior Transportation Engineer in July, 1992. Following the Northridge Earthquake on January 17, 1994, Reagan was Project Manager of 10 reconstruction projects on Routes 5, 118, 210, 101, 2 and 134. The rapid reconstruction of damaged freeways following the massive earthquake earned Caltrans international acclaim. In addition, Reagan was Project Manager on the Malibu Lagoon Bridge replacement and other major storm damage projects on Pacific Coast Highway (1).

While working as Project Manager for the Route 710 Freeway gap closure, he served on the 710 Freeway Advisory



Bill Reagan, the new Deputy District Director for the District 7 Division of Design.





It's hard to believe that it is 2002 already. District 7 had an outstanding 2001 and I am looking forward to another exceptional year ahead. This is the first time since early February, 1999 that we have a full executive team on board with the addition of Bill Reagan as our new Deputy District Director for Design. I look forward to working with Bill and wish him the best in his new position.

In reflecting upon the many accomplishments and changes this past year, one can see there were many. One noteworthy award, in particular, was for District 7's position as the number one District statewide in project delivery - an outstanding accomplishment. And in the latter part of August we had one weekend to reduce by 600 the amount of personnel in the District Office Building (DOB). Because of the District-wide cooperation by each and every one of you — whether telecommuting from home or remote Maintenance facilities — or making whatever other adjustments that were necessary — we were able to succeed. In what turned out to be a relatively short period of time, we were able to relocate personnel to 1000 Wilshire Boulevard and 801 South Grand Avenue while we wait for our new DOB facility. Once again, I want to thank all of you for your spirit of teamwork and cooperation. Updates on our new building will be forthcoming.

Congratulations! to District 7's Maintenance Equipment Operators Henry Harris and Dale Haun from the Chilao Road Crew, who came in second place and fourth place overall, respectively, at the 2001 Caltrans Maintenance "Roadeo" State Finals held recently in District 5. This is a testament to their amazing skills and proficiency. In addition, Jose Escobedo, Tree Maintenance Worker, East Region, won the State Finals champi-

onship in the Tree Jamboree competition due to his hard work and expertise in that field; and we also applaud Chris Morales, Tree Maintenance Worker who placed third. My congratulations to Henry, Dale, Juan and Chris — and to all the Maintenance employees at the "Roadeo," whether they won or had just fun competing.

During 2002, I am looking forward to the completion and opening to traffic of the Route 210 extension in Claremont, previously known as Route 30. This is a road that has been around for over 30 years that some thought would never be built. However, through the efforts of the local communities and determination of Districts 7 and 8 staffs, we will see it open to commuters soon. This roadway will be a great asset to east/west traffic throughout both Districts 7 and 8, San Bernardino. At the completion of this portion of Route 210, there is only one remaining adopted freeway route in Los Angeles County to be completed. This route also has been planned for some 30plus years.

The end of the year tends to be retirement time. Both Satish Chander, Chief, Office of Local Assistance and Pat Perovich, Chief, Office of ITS Development, retired effective by December 31, 2001. It is also strongly rumored that the Executive Secretary to nine District 7 Directors — an amazing accomplishment — is planning to leave on an extended vacation this spring and not return. These individuals have given a lifetime of hard work, dedication and contributions to Caltrans — and all will be greatly missed. •

ROBERT W. SASSAMAN District Director

Bill Reagan

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Committee and helped secure the route adoption by the California Transportation Commission in 1994.

As Executive Assistant from 1995 through 1997, Reagan was responsible for maintaining strong lines of communication between Caltrans, elected officials, the news media and the public. He represented the Department on transportation issues, policies and processes. In addition, Reagan was responsible for planning media events and assisting the District Director in the implementation of the District's mission, vision and goals.

In 1997 Reagan took over duties as Office Chief, Office of Design A, until his appointment to Deputy District Director. Some of the noteworthy achievements accomplished by his office during this period included:

- Completion of the Harbor Freeway (110) Transitway
- San Bernardino (I-10) and Long Beach Freeway (710) Long-Life Pavement projects
- I-5 Major Investment Study
- · Relinguishment Program Manager

Doug Failing, Chief Deputy, said he was pleased to hear of Reagan's appointment. "I am delighted to welcome Bill Reagan to his new position," he said.

Reagan said he is very proud to be working with the people in the Division of Design. "The Division of Design has a tradition of meeting challenges in the past. I am confident that everyone in the Division will continue to work together to meet our delivery goals." Reagan also added that he is eager to move forward on many projects involving the Governor's Transportation Congestion Relief Program (TCRP).

Best wishes to Bill Reagan in his new position! •

Caltrans' Maintenance Equipment "Roadeo"

Recognizing Skill, Providing Training and Promoting Safety

By John Cottier, Chief, Headquarters Office of Maintenance Equipment and Emergency Operations

The Caltrans Maintenance Equipment "Roadeo" is a series of competitive events where men and women Maintenance employees test their equipment skills against each other in a friendly, but purposeful atmosphere. Since 1991, this competition has represented Caltrans' Maintenance Program's commitment to the safe and professional operation of highway equipment by employees on a daily basis. The event is sponsored through the American Public Works Association (APWA) and supported by various vendors and groups.

Although members of the Department look forward each year to a friendly competition against each other, and ultimately against the best equipment operators from other departments of transportation across the country, the contest has a very serious purpose. Since the "Roadeo" program's inception, the primary objectives are to promote personal and operational safety; to provide and motivate employee equipment training; and to recognize the skill of the Caltrans rank-and-file Maintenance employees. There is also a manager's or executive competition. Thus, the "Roadeo" represents more than just friendly competition; the competitors represent all Maintenance employees who patrol California's roadways. They work nights, weekends and holidays — often during severe weather and treacherous conditions — to keep California's highway transportation system safe and functioning for the traveling public.

The competition's format is simple. Employees from each of the 12 Caltrans districts are invited to compete in the Southern or Northern Regional "Roadeo" events. The top three individual event winners from the two regional events are then entitled to compete at the State Finals in San Luis Obispo to determine the top four contestants in California. The top finisher in each District and the overall winner statewide are awarded a perpetual trophy for dis-



"Roadeo" finalists at the Southern Regionals in Big Bear, District 8. Left to right: Larry Orcutt, Headquarters Maintenance Manager; Jeff Renfro, Equipment Operator, District 8; Greg Hobbs, Equipment Operator, District 8; Henry Harris, Equipment Operator, District 7; and George Swift from the International Union of Operating Engineers.

play in the home District until the following year. In addition, the top four overall contestants from the State Finals are eligible to compete at the National Finals held in Colorado. Caltrans and the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) pay the time, travel expenses and registration fees at the National Competition sponsored by the APWA in Colorado.

Following are some of the events that took place at the "Roadeo":

- Truck Plow Competition Event
- Backhoe Bowling Competition Event
- Chain On/Off Competition Event
- Grader Competition Event
- · Loader Competition Event
- Tree Jamboree Competition Event
- Novice Event
- Manager's Cup Event
- · Executive Cup Event
- Junior Roadeo (Ages 3 through 9)
- Barbecue luncheon for families and visitors (sponsored by the IUOE) Demonstrations by the California Highway Patrol, local fire departments and various groups.

Results from the Caltrans 2001 "Roadeo" finals held in District 5 at San Luis Obispo

Executive Cup Event:

Champion: Steve Price, District 5 Second Place: Larry Orcutt, Headquarters Third Place: Mike Brown, Headquarters

Manager's Cup Event:

Champion: Jeff Anderson, District 10 Second Place: Dale Bourne, District 3 Third Place: Mike Peterson, District 4



"Go Climb A Tree!"

It's All in a Day's Work for Master Tree Maintenance Worker Juan Escobedo

If someone were to tell Juan Escobedo from the Caltrans East Region Maintenance office to "go climb a tree," he wouldn't think twice about it. Not only would he do it – he would do it better than anyone else in the entire state of California! That's because Escobedo is not just your average Tree Maintenance Worker – he is the overall state champion of the Tree Jamboree event as part of the Maintenance Equipment "Roadeo" finals held recently in San Luis Obispo at Caltrans District 5. (Please see "Roadeo" article, page 3).

Escobedo faired extremely well at the Southern Regional Tree Jamboree Finals in Big Bear where he placed first in the Work Climb event, second in the Chain Saw event and second in the All-Around event. This qualified him to compete in the American Public Works Association APWA/Caltrans State Finals in San Luis Obispo. There, he placed first in the Knot Tying Event, first in the Work Climb Event and first in the All-Around Event. "I am very happy to have had the opportunity to compete at these finals and show what I know," said Escobedo. "It was great getting the award and I hope to earn more in future competitions."

Escobedo began his career as a Caltrans Tree Maintenance Worker in September, 1999. "I am very lucky to be working at Caltrans," Escobedo said. "I try to do my best work and do my work right." Prior to working for Caltrans, he was employed for nine years at Asplundh Tree Service where he had worked since the age of 18. Greg Flores, Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor, said that he is very happy to have Escobedo on his crew. "Juan is an enthusiastic, take-charge employee, who wants to do the job right the first time," said Flores. "He is always willing to share his knowledge of tree work with his fellow employees to ensure a safe work environment."

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Juan Escobedo, right, receives his award for Champion of the Tree Jamboree from East Region Maintenance Manager, Roy Pool.

"Roadeo"

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Overall Tree Jamboree Finals:

Champion: Juan Escobedo, District 7 Second Place: Mike Abernathy, District 11 Third Place: Chris Morales, District 7

Overall Equipment "Roadeo" Finals:

Champion: Doug Bungarz, District 2 Second Place: Henry Harris, District 7 Third Place: Scott Crowe, District 2 Fourth Place: Dale Haun, District 7

In addition, there was the Novice Event for non-Caltrans employees which included many family members and friends; and the Junior Roadeo, ages three to nine where all were winners and each received miniature hard-hats, badges, fast-food gift certificates and more.

Results from the National Equipment "Roadeo" held in Estes Park, Colorado, September, 2001

During the week of September 24 through 28, 2001, the top four finishers from the statewide Caltrans Equipment "Roadeo" competed at the National Snow Equipment "Roadeo" in Estes Park, Colorado. The best equipment operators in the nation came to compete against the best from Caltrans — Doug Bungarz and Scott Crow of District 2, and Henry Harris and Dale Haun of District 7. All in all, there were 300 contestants from 23 states. Among them there were: 47 contestants for the grader; 72 contestants for the loader; 62 teams for the single axle; and 67 teams for the tandem axle.

The top four Caltrans finishers performed extremely well. All four placed extremely high in the written exam, as well as placing in the top 12 for the grader and the top 20 for the single axle. They continued the Caltrans tradition of skill, teamwork, competiveness and camaraderie.

Although each competition produced individual winners, the Caltrans "Roadeo" program is a tribute to the talent and dedication of all Caltrans employees. And it serves as a showcase of employees' equipment skills, teamwork and especially the commitment to safety – Caltrans' number-one priority. But the real win-



Caltrans' holiday donations are distributed to local children at the Los Angeles Mission.

Holiday Donations Benefit The Los Angeles Mission

The annual toy and gift drive was once again a huge success, as evident by the over-flowing donations which filled the holiday cage in the District Office Building's lobby. As always, the Caltrans spirit of giving was apparent as Robert W. Sassaman, District Director and Doug Failing, Chief Deputy, helped send this year's collection on their merry way to the Los Angeles Mission.

Mission representatives Allan Cervalo and Jose Villalta met with Sassman and Failing December 20 in the Caltrans lobby to transport the countless contributions. Toys, games, clothes, stuffed animals and gifts for adults as well, were happily donated by generous Caltrans employees and retirees alike.

Cervalo and Villalta extended their sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone at Caltrans who, each year, give generously to their worthy organization. Since 1949, the Los Angeles Mission, located at 303 North 5th Street, provides refuge to some 125,000 needy people. Their mission is to provide hope and opportunity to destitute men, women and children of Los Angeles through spiritual, physical, education and social rehabilitation. The Mission provides hot meals, clean clothing, safe shelter, free medical and dental services as well as education, vocational and job placement training, counseling and much more. It is one of the few full-time clinics in Downtown Los Angeles dedicated to caring for the destitute and homeless free of charge. They are currently recognized as one of the largest service providers to the homeless in the nation. And Caltrans is always happy to

"This year, as in each year past, Caltrans is happy and proud to do our part to help those less fortunate," said Sassaman. "I want to sincerely thank everyone who gave so generously to the Los Angeles Mission." •



Caltrans sends holiday donations on their merry way to the Los Angeles Mission. Left to right: Allan Ceravolo, Director of Community Relations, Los Angeles Mission; Doug Failing, Chief Deputy, District 7; Robert W. Sassaman, District 7 Director; and Jose Villalta, Gifts-In-Kind Coordinator, Los Angeles Mission.



"Personally, I am so impressed!" exclaimed Raja Mitwasi, Deputy District Director for Program and Project Management. What Mitwasi is referring to is the ongoing, outstanding efforts by everyone in District 7 to maintain excellence in project delivery.

According to Mitwasi, first quarter project delivery yielded an impressive 100% with the second quarter following closely at 98%. "We are still in the lead, statewide," he said. "With the many temporary disruptions and recent relocations, the teams are working more closely than ever."

Mitwasi credits his Division's success to their teamwork, innovation and focus. "The way we made it happen was that everyone is working above and beyond the call of duty," he said. He added that alternative "design stations" were identified and utilized on weekends during the recent office relocations in order to not lose precious time. In addition, critical projects were identified and focused on in order to stay on track and on time.

Mitwasi also noted that third and fourth quarter project delivery is going to be challenging. "We have much work ahead of us," he said. "I know that our staff will not let their guard down and the Caltrans Program and Project Management teams will continue to keep moving forward to stay on track, on time and number one statewide in project delivery! Thanks to all for their continued dedication to excellence!"



Alex Cajina, left, Equipment Shop 7 Superintendent, congratulating Ruben De Alba upon receiving a well-deserved safety award, says he will be missed by all.

Escobedo

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Roy Pool, East Region Maintenance Manager, couldn't agree more. "Caltrans is extremely fortunate to have an employee of the caliber of Juan Escobedo," said Pool. "He brings a tremendous amount of skill and knowledge to the tree maintenance program."

For the Escobedos, tree maintenance work is all in the family. "I come from a family of tree workers," Escobedo said. One uncle works on the West Region Maintenance Tree Crew; a cousin on the South Region Maintenance Tree Crew; and another uncle on the District 8 San Bernardino Maintenance Tree Crew. As for master Tree Maintenance Worker Juan Escobedo, climbing trees is all in a day's work! •



A lot of planning and teamwork goes into preparing for the Maintenance Equipment "Roadeo" State Finals held at District 5 in San Luis Obispo.

Caltrans Remembers Ruben De Alba

Ruben De Alba, an 11-year Maintenance Heavy Equipment Mechanic, passed away recently after a brave battle with cancer. De Alba began his career as a Field Mechanic with the Altadena Maintenance yard and also worked for a period of time at the Chilao facility. His mechanical skills were reflected in his confidence in making important decisions within the realm of heavy equipment repairs. He is also to be commended for his thorough and pro-active communications skills. A common thread that was woven into his working career was that he always put in an honest day's work and that he touched the lives of those with whom he worked.

De Alba was a dedicated family man and also had many friends within the Caltrans "family." "I was very proud to have worked with Ruben," said David McDonough, Maintenance Supervisor. According to his wife, Sharon, De Alba totally enjoyed his job. "Working at Caltrans was one of his dreams that really came true," she said. Above all, De Alba enjoyed life and loved doing all of his favorite things with his family and friends. He will be remembered for being a "people person" — the kind of person who would give someone the shirt off his back if he felt they needed it.

Caltrans sends its most sincere condolences to the De Alba family. •

"Roadeo"

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ners ultimately are the taxpayers and highway users of California — because this friendly but serious competition hones the skills — provides the training — and promotes the all-important elements of safety – which each and every Caltrans employee needs to maintain the more than 49,000 lane miles of California's beautiful highways and freeways across the Golden State. Congratulations to all participants! •

··· RETIREE SPOTLIGHT···

Satish Chander Retires

By Patricia Reid

After a long and fulfilling career with Caltrans, Satish Chander, Chief, Office of Local Assistance, announced his retirement and said. "Now I will have more time to devote to my golf game." Satish recently received numerous commendations from many of the 110 agencies he worked with and a series of special luncheons were held in his honor. Deputy District Director Ron Kosinski, a good friend and golfing buddy, served as Master of Ceremonies at his January 9 retirement luncheon at Luminarias Restaurant in Monterey Park. Ron said, "When Satish gets involved, you know you will be getting 100% effort from him. That is why he has had such a successful career at Caltrans and won so many of our golf tournaments!"

The Division of Highways recruited Satish over 34 years ago on the campus of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge where he received his civil engineering degree. "After taking a written exam I was hired on the spot," he said. Satish said his wife was happy to leave Louisiana's humid weather for drier Southern California where the climate is more like their home in India. Satish first came to work for District 7 in the Le Sage Building on Vermont where he participated in the civil engineering rotation program. His first permanent assignment was in Hydraulics.

He has been involved in many different assignments during his 34-plus-year career at Caltrans. He enjoyed working on designing the Riverside Freeway (Route 91) through Orange County when Orange County was part of District 7. He helped design the drainage for the I-605 and is proud to have done design work for the 710/60 Interchange and on the state-of-the-art, I-105 freeway.

Being a member of the '84 Olympics Task Force was his favorite special assignment. He was assigned to the City of Los Angeles' Piper Technical Building and had an opportunity to interact with staff from Los Angeles City Department of Transportation, California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles County, Federal Bureau of



Satish Chander, front and center in gray suit, and his Office of Local Assistance, gathers for a rare group photo.

Investigation and other agencies. "That was a really exciting assignment," he said. He especially liked the numerous helicopter rides he went on to check out Olympic venues and to scope out viable alternate routes.

As a Senior Transportation Engineer he worked in the Office of Traffic Operations, Environmental Planning, Investigation and Design. He promoted to Deputy District Director, Project Development and Construction in District 9 (Bishop). Satish said that was another favorite assignment with the added benefit that he took up snow skiing while living in Bishop.

He returned to District 7 after three years and became Chief of Local Assistance and the Alameda Corridor, a post he held the past nine years until his retirement on 12/28/01. He and his staff have worked at the Metropolitan Water District headquarters building for over a year. Satish and his 50-member staff work with 110 different cities and agencies. He kept busy attending many agency meetings in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. He also was very involved with planning and oversight for the \$2.4-billion Alameda Corridor Project since its inception in 1999. He said Caltrans staff reviewed plans and carefully checked all projects south of Route 91 because eventually the Department will take over that portion of the corridor and it will become a future state highway. "The Alameda Corridor is an impressive project and I'm looking forward to attending the grand opening ceremony in April 2002," he said enthusiastically.

On November 29, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) Board of Directors presented Satish with a special resolution (signed by Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn and other board members) which stated "Mr. Chander provided invaluable guidance to LACMTA in processing various projects under state and federal funding programs." It also noted that his expertise was crucial in the scheduling and timely completion of numerous projects, ranging from countywide seismic bridge retrofits to the Ports Access Demonstration Program. He was also "instrumental in providing necessary training programs and regional workshops for cities and local agencies regarding the policies, procedures and laws governing state and federally funded projects."

The Los Angeles Harbor Department Board also commended him for his accomplishments and years of service as did the Alameda Corridor – East Construction Authority and many other agencies. Staff from the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation also held a special luncheon to honor him.

In closing Satish said, "Caltrans is one of the best freeway builders in the world and it is one of the best places to work. I've really enjoyed my 34-plus years." •

n At Caltrans

"ROUTE 66" CHILI

From www.epicurious.com

3 lbs. trimmed boneless pork shoulder cut into 1-inch pieces

1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes in juice

2 19-ounce cans enchilada sauce

All-purpose flour

1 7-ounce can diced green chilies

1/2 cup olive oil

1 tablespoon ground cumin

3/4 cup chopped onion

1 tablespoon chili powder

4 poblano chilies, chopped (optional)

Sour cream

1/4 cup chopped garlic

Sliced green onions

Dredge pork in flour to coat; shake off excess. Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add pork and brown on all sides, about 8 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer pork to large bowl. Add remaining 1/4 cup olive oil to same pot. Add onion and sauté until translucent, about 4 minutes. Add poblano chilies and garlic and sauté 2 minutes. Mix in pork, diced tomatoes with their juice, enchilada sauce, diced green chilies, cumin and chili powder. Simmer until meat is tender and chili thickens slightly, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour. Serve chili with sour cream and sliced green onions.

WINTER ENERGY COOKIES

From www.allrecipes.com

1 cup unsalted butter

1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar

2 eaas

1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda

1 cup raisins

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 cup semi-sweet chocolate morsels

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 cup all-purpose flour 1 cup toasted wheat germ

1/3 cup molasses

2 cups rolled oats

1/3 cup creamy peanut butter

1 cup chopped walnuts

1-1/2 cups whole-wheat flour

1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Cream butter, sugar, molasses and peanut butter in bowl. Blend in eggs and vanilla. Mix flour, wheat germ, baking soda, salt and cinnamon in separate bowl. Stir dry ingredients into creamed mixture until blended. Stir in oats, raisins, chocolate chips and nuts. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Shape dough into large balls using 1/4 cup of dough per cookie. Place on greased cookie sheet leaving 3 inches between each. Flatten slightly with fork. Bake 15-18 minutes. When done, tops will still be soft to the touch. Cool on sheets 5 minutes then transfer to rack to cool.



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